His Friend, His Ally

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/13208157.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationship:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham, Jack Crawford
Additional Tags:	Pre-Relationship, season 1 AU, Series Finale, Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Shooting, Mental Instability, Frustrated Jack, Confused FBI, Gleeful Hannibal
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2017-12-30 Completed: 2018-01-01 Words: 2,956 Chapters: 3/3

His Friend, His Ally

by madwriter223

Summary

Will stood in that horrible kitchen, the floor still dark with Abigail's blood. The world around him was shimmering, trembling, burning, drowning. He'd been losing his mind for a long time now, but this- this felt like the last grasping fingers of his sanity was slipping down into the bottomless pit of madness.

And within it all, Hannibal stood next to him. Constant, stable, unchanging. But Will blinked, and the Ravenstag was behind Hannibal, and suddenly Will knew.

OR: What if Will had reacted differently to finding out who Hannibal really was in the season 1 finale?

Notes

Hey, all!
So, this is a little re-write of season 1 finale. Basically, my muse sat up one day and said 'What if Will reacted differently to Hannibal's true identity?'. Thus this was born. ^_^
There will the three parts in total, I'll be posting them daily. So the last part will be up on New Year's Day. ^_^
Now, without further ado, ENJOY!

See the end of the work for more notes

The Realization

Will stood in the middle of that horrible kitchen, the floor dark with Abigail's blood. He wavered on his feet, his whole body shivering. He closed his eyes, trying to focus on something else than the blood and the humming in his ears.

Hannibal. Hannibal was speaking.

He spoke about... loneliness. About isolation. About parts of Will that, if he let them, could flourish and turn him into someone else. Something else.

But there was something else underneath the words. Something... darker. Older. Something that had always been there, underlining most of Hannibal's words.

Will opened his eyes and turned around, flinching when he saw it. The wendigo, black and horrid as in his nightmares. It was standing right behind Hannibal, its head right by his, its antlers growing higher the longer it stood there.

No, that's not right. The wendigo didn't feel- it felt familiar. As if it had always been there. Just like the underlining something whn Hannibal spoke.

Hannibal.

Will's mind was burning and he was drowning, but the fog finally lifted from his eyes, and Will could finally see.

With a shiver and a shimmer, a tremor and a shudder, the wendigo took a step forward, *into* Hannibal. No, not into. It became. No, that's not right either. It revealed itself.

Hannibal. Hannibal was...

“You're-” It couldn't be. *It couldn't be.* **It was.** “You're the killer. The copycat.” No. More. He was more. “The Cheasapeak Ripper. Aren't you?”

Hannibal's expression remained one of concern, but Will felt the surprise in him. “Will. You are confused.”

“Oh, you have no idea.” The antlers grew from Hannibal's head, stretching wide like gnarled claws lifting upwards to threaten the sky. “But now I see.” Will took half a step towards Hannibal, face intent despite the ticks twitching across his cheek. “I can see you.”

“And what do you see, Will?” Hannibal cocked his head to the side, a tiny incline of the dark shadow that was his true skin.

It was pure black, like a starless night illuminated by a gentle moon.

He was terrifying. He was beautiful. He was Hannibal.

“I can see you now.” Will's voice broke, and he drew in a shuddery breath through clenched teeth. “I can't protect you.” The truth of that statement stung deep in his chest, and Will felt his hand clench on his gun.

The beast paused, and the human beneath it blinked in confusion. “Will?”

“I can't- I'm unstable, I'm insane, I can't protect you.” Each word deepened the sting and tightened his fingers on the gun.

“Perhaps I don't need protecting, Will.” Hannibal tried to soothe him, but he didn't understand. He didn't see what Will saw, he didn't know what Will knew.

“I can't protect you. From Jack, from yourself, from the FBI.” He tried to make the creature understand, implored the human underneath to understand. “You kept playing tricks. Winding me up to see how far I'll go. You- you do that. Play with people, play with their minds. That's dangerous. It's- It's not good. And I'm- I'm unstable. I can't protect you if you get caught.” It had to understand, Hannibal had to understand!

Nor creature nor human did. “Will. Perhaps we should step outside. Fresh air might clear your head.”

Will stared at the black skin, the warm eyes, the antlers reaching towards the sky like gnarled fingers lifted in supplication. “I have to- I have to....” He couldn't protect him, but he had to. He had to. The world destroyed and violated, it twisted and mangled! Will had to protect him! Had to protect Hannibal before the world realised and came down to crush him.

So Will lifted his gun and pointed it at Hannibal. “I'm sorry. This is the only way.”

“Will.” Hannibal stared at the gun with wide eyes, but he didn't flinch. He didn't move away. There was no fear in him, just the infinite trust of a friend. “Will, is this who you are? Are you a killer?” But the question was spoken as if Hannibal already knew the answer. As if he knew Will inside out.

Maybe he did.

Outside, Will heard a car arrive and his chest clenched. What if it was Jack? What if Will was too late? What if they locked Will away? What if they took Hannibal away? What if Will was forever left without his paddle? Without his friend?

“It's the only way,” he murmured, eyes wet and hands shaking. Twitching. Spasming.

“Will.” Hannibal put his warm hand on Will's, and the blackness of his skin seemed to bleed onto Will. Giving him strength. “It is all right. There is no danger here. Let us go outside, and calm down.”

But Will could hear footsteps nearing. Jack, it was Jack, Will was sure of it.

And Hannibal was looking at him with such trust, calm and collected and untouchable. Will would not let anyone touch him, would not let anyone take him away.

He pulled the trigger, and Hannibal fell back.
~

The Impossible

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Hannibal climbed slowly onto the bed, then thanked the nurse who had helped him. He leaned back against the pillow, his arm numb from anesthesia. The bullet wound in his shoulder had already been cleaned and stitched shut – the doctors had assured him that it shouldn't leave much of a scar.

Dear William. Even in his delirium, he'd acted in such surprising ways. Right now, Will was tended to by a slew of doctors, who were treating the bullet wound Jack had taken Will down with. Perhaps Hannibal and Will would have matching scars.

Hannibal had to doubts that fairly soon, they would discover the encephalitis as well. Then, they would probably induce a coma to properly treat it, which should give Hannibal enough time to arrange everything.

But there would be time for that later. He glanced at the door, making sure the nurse had closed it properly as she'd left. Then he took out his phone and dialed one of the numbers he would need to call. It didn't take long for the other side to pick up.

“It's me. Yes. I wish to collect on that favor you owe me. Yes, exactly. Time is of the essence, my friend.” He disconnected the call without another word, then selected the next person on his list.

~

And within two short days, everything was finished.

~

Jack stared at Will lying on the hospital bed. Everything was as it had been the last time he'd visited. Being placed into an induced coma meant that seeing Will on that bed was each time the same.

Except today it wasn't. Will wasn't cuffed to the bed, as was standard procedure for patients under arrest. Nor was there a guard stationed at his door, like there had been the last time Jack had been here. Anyone could just walk in here, starting with that lunatic Freddie Lounds.

“Excuse me.” He stopped a nearby nurse and gestured at Will's room. “Where is the security guard that should be stationed here?”

“He went back to his duties,” the nurse informed him, with the look of someone being polite only because it was their job. He propped the tray he was holding against his hip. “As Mr.

Graham isn't under arrest, the hospital manager didn't see the point in wasting our guard's time. If you'll excuse me-"

Jack snorted in disbelief. "What do you mean 'not under arrest'? He shot somebody!" Not to mention the possibility of being a serial killer.

The nurse blinked at him, as if it was the first time he'd heard of it. "I'm sorry, but are you sure about that? Was he just brought in?"

Jack couldn't believe what he was hearing. "No, he was brought here a couple days ago. He should still be under guard!" For his protection more that anything else. Until they woke him from the induced sleep, at least.

"Sir, calm down. Please go to the nurse's station, someone will check in the system for you. Now please excuse me, I'm really swamped." And he hurried away, ducking into one of the nearby rooms.

Jack scowled and marched straight to the nurse's station. He would get to the bottom of this odd turn of events, no matter who he had to demand answers from.

Except the nurses couldn't help him, nor the hospital administrator. According to the system, Will was nothing more than a patient suffering from extreme encephalitis. There was only a short note that he had been brought in by the FBI as a possible suspect, but that had apparently been rescinded some time during the night, thus the handcuff was removed.

Ridiculous.

With a glare, Jack grabbed his phone and called the Bureau.

~

"What the hell do you mean, there is no evidence?!" Jack demanded the moment he marched into Prurnell's office.

She raised a single hand, palm towards him. "Calm down, Jack. I can't explain it myself."

"This has to be a joke. It. Is. Not. Funny." Jack emphasized each word by stabbing his finger against her desk.

"On that we agree, but the facts are facts. There is no evidence to be found."

Jack boggled his eyes at her, in pure disbelief. "How can that be? We had enough evidence to fill in a whole cabinet!"

"I know that." Prurnell's eyes narrowed into a glare. "I've had the technicians go through everything with a fine toothed comb. There are no files, physical or electronic, to be found anywhere. Every single shred of evidence we've collected from Will Graham's house is gone. There is nothing to prove that any of his 'crimes' had actually happened."

Jack felt his anger throbbing in his temples. “Except it did happen! We were not having a mass hallucination! I saw Will shoot Hannibal with my own eyes! We've performed the DNA test on Abigail's ear, found in Will's goddamn sink! It! Did! Happen!”

All Prurnell could do was spread her hands. “Except, without the evidence, it's all hearsay.”

“I did not just hear that.” Jack stared at her, his tone the calm of absolute outrage.

His tone had no effect on Prurnell. “Except you did. There is nothing, Jack! No evidence, no reports, no witness statements! Even the ear is gone! According to the lack of files, all that's happened *didn't* happen!”

“Then start a new file!” Jack demanded, slamming his fist against his knee.

“We can't! Not without evidence!”

Jack sat down with a frustrated huff, one hand clenching over his mouth briefly. “Are you telling me that Will, who might've killed all those people, will just walk away from this? Without getting any psychiatric treatment whatsoever?”

Prurnell gave a single grim nod. “Yes, because there is nothing. Our word alone is not enough. Not without physical evidence. Right now we don't even have enough to put surveillance on him.”

“What about my testimony? I *saw* him shoot Hannibal!”

“Except according to the report you've filed,” She lifted a folder from her desk, waving it slightly at Jack. “You just heard the gunshot and rushed into the room when doctor Lecter had been already on the floor.”

True, that had been what Jack had written in the report. He'd thought if there were enough doubts that Will had done it deliberately, it might lessen his sentence. But no, Will couldn't just be turned loose again, without any mandatory help. Jack knew that without it, Will would never voluntarily go near a psychiatrist. Wait, Hannibal. “Hannibal gave his statement too. Can't you use that?”

“We've already checked.” Prurnell sounded tired, and that didn't fill Jack with any hope.

“And?”

“And,” she grabbed a second folder from her desk, opening it. “According to Dr. Lecter, the gun had gone off accidentally. Because Graham had been shaking so much due to the encephalitis.”

“I did not just hear that.”

Prurnell ignored that and handed the folder to Jack. “He's Will Graham's therapist. When he says the shooting was accidental and that he will testify to that in court? I have to believe him it was accidental. And there isn't any evidence that says otherwise.”

“But-” Jack glanced at Hannibal's report, his head whirling. There had to be *some* way. “Will needs to be placed under psychiatric observation, at the least.”

But Prurnell shook her head. “We have no grounds for that. No evidence to suggest Graham is unstable. Outside of the encephalitis.”

Anything, there had to be *anything*! “Freddy Lounds will have something. She always has something.” But Jack was grasping at straws, and he knew it.

“Freddy Lounds.” Prurnell repeated, her voice flat and not amused. “The woman who openly admits to having a vendetta against Graham. No judge will accept a case based sorely on her testimony.”

Jack rested his forehead against his hand. What if- “What about Abigail Hobbs's body? If we find that, then-”

Prurnell sat up straighter and grabbed another folder, this one thicker than the other two. “That's another thing I need to tell you about. We've found Abigail Hobbs.”

That can't be what Jack just heard. “*Where*?”

Prurnell opened the folder and took out a stack of photos, spreading them in front of Jack. “At the airport. She got onto a plane to France two days ago.”

Jack hesitantly took one, and indeed. There she was. Abigail Hobbs. “Alive?” he had to ask, even though he could see with his own eyes. Abigail at the check-in, Abigail in the waiting lounge, Abigail nearing the gate.

“Yes.” Prurnell replied nonetheless, and that spurned a new wave of rage in Jack.

“That's... then bring her back! She needs to explain this!” But most of all, he wanted to make sure whether her ear was there or not.

But Prurnell shook her head again, damn her. “Extradition is not possible. She hadn't been formally charged with anything, and, just as with Will, we have no ground to recall her back to the United States.”

“She's a suspect in the murder of Nicholas Boyle!” Jack jumped to his feet.

Prurnell glared at him. “No, she isn't! You yourself have cleared her of the charges! All she was was a person of interest, and we can't stop her from leaving the country!”

“What about for faking her death? That has to be illegal!”

Prurnell pursed her lips. “Her death certificate is also nowhere to be found.”

Jack stared at her, his mind refusing to wrap around that information. “What?”

“None of it happened, Jack. Not in anyway we can prove it.”

Jack sat back onto the chair, feeling numb all over. This couldn't be possible. How could Abigail be alive? How could all that evidence just disappear? How was it possible to just erase everything that's happened? How the Hell could all of it just disappear without a trace?!

~

Hannibal stared down at Will's wrist, free of the handcuff, and smiled.

~

Chapter End Notes

Once again, guys, PLEASE LEAVE A **COMMENT**! I really want to know what you think. ^_^

The Awakening

Chapter Notes

> This is just a little epilogue of sorts. I had intended it to be a short little thing from the start, so I'm unable to say if I'll continue on not. Still, I hope you all ENJOY! ^_^

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Will woke slowly. He blinked once, twice, three times before his eyes finally focused enough for him to see. He was in a hospital room, though he'd known that even before opening his eyes. The smell of antiseptic and the beeping of machines had been a dead give away.

A wisp of something low, something dark drifted up to him from the left and he turned his head to look.

Hannibal was there. He was sitting on the single chair next to Will's bed, dressed in a soft looking sweater. His arm was in a brace, and Will could see a stark white bandage peaking out near his neck. He stared at it – at the brace and that tiny bit of bandage. Slowly, he became aware of his own body – numb, aching and heavy. Had he been sick? In an accident?

Hannibal shifted in his seat, and just like that Will remembered. The weight of the gun in his hand, the loud bang as he pulled the trigger, Hannibal falling back. He'd missed then, he realized. The bullet must've hit Hannibal in the shoulder, instead of his head. But Jack had stopped him before Will could finish and keep Hannibal safe.

Safe? Keep Hannibal safe from what?

He remembered the creature then, the being of inky blackness, filled to the brim with danger and suffering. He remembered the antlers, he remembered the bottomless eyes staring at him.

He remembered how warm Hannibal's hand had been on his own.

“Hello, Hannibal.” he managed to croak, his throat parched and aching.

Hannibal smiled, that kind smile he'd always had. But this time, Will could see the predator behind his eyes as well. “Hello, Will. How are you feeling?”

“Fine.” Will replied automatically, his gaze focused on Hannibal. On his face and what he knew was hiding underneath.

“Do you remember what happened?” Hannibal asked, his head tilting delicately to the side. A predator eyeing potential prey. Or a potential ally.

“I remember all of it,” Will let a small smile form on his face. He reached out with one hand, fingers stretching towards Hannibal. I see you, he tried to say without words. I see you. And I will protect you still. From Jack, from the world. The more he stared at Hannibal, his paddle, his friend, the more that resolution hardened inside him. He would keep Hannibal safe. This time, with a clear head and a stable mind.

Hannibal smiled, and the predator behind his eyes smiled with him. He put his hand delicately into Will's, and wrapped his fingers around it. Will replied in kind, secure in the knowledge that Hannibal was by his side.

AN: Later on, once Hannibal explains everything, Will be both angry and impressed. Mostly angry, at first. But not once will he give Hannibal any reason to doubt him.

END

Chapter End Notes

COMMENTS ARE LIFE!
Please leave a review, I really want to know what you think! ^_^

End Notes

COMMENTS ARE LIFE!
Please leave a review, I really want to know what you think! ^_^

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!